Long Live the King

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HEDWIG IS OFFERED AS A SACRIFICE TO SAVE THE TOT-TERING KINGDOM OF LIVONIA.

Synopsis.-The crown prince of Livonia, Ferdinand William Otto, ten years old, taken to the opera by his aunt, tires of the singing and altps away to the park, where he makes the acquaintance of Bobby Thorpe, a little American boy. Returning to the palace at night, he finds everything in an uproar as a result of the search which has been made for him. The same night the chancellor calls to consult the boy's grandfather, the old king, who is very ill. The chancellor suggests that to preserve the kingdom, the friendship of the neighboring kingdom of Karnia be secured by giving the Princess Hedwig in marriage to King Karl of that country. Countess Loschek, lady-in-waiting to Princess Annunciata, Hedwig's mother, is in love with King Karl and plots to prevent his marriage to Hedwig. Hedwig, who loves Nikky Larisch, Otto's aid de camp, is dismayed when told of the plans for her marriage. Countess Loschek sends a secret message to King Kart. The messenger is attacked by agents of the terrorists and a dummy letter substituted. Captain Larisch, unaware of the substitution, holds up Karl's chauffeur and secures the envelope. The captain impersonates Kart's chauffour and exchanges the sheet within the envelope for some cigarette papers. On delivering the envelope to Karl, Larisch is made prisoner when the deception is discovered.

CHAPTER VII-Continued.

The archduchess was terrified. She had known that there was disaffection about. She knew that in the last few been increased. Sentries were doubled.

"Of course," the king resumed. "things are not as bad as that paper | she came. tadicates. It is the voice of the few. rather than the many. Still, it is a

Annunciata looked more than her age She glanced around the room



"I Will Go Myself."

as though, already, she heard the mob

To return to the matter of Hedwig's marriage," said the king. "I-" "Marriage! When our very lives are

"I would be greatly honored," said the king, "if I might be permitted to Saish what I was saying."

She had the grace to flush. "Under the circumstances," the ting resumed, "Hedwig's marriage takes on great significance-great po-

attest significance." For a half-hour then, he falked to Ser. More than for years, he unlightened; the representation of the with ceremony. No ordinary king's people increased, until, as he said, he messenger, then, but some dignitary of was only nominally a ruler. But dis-

content remained. Some who had gone to America and returned with savings enough to set themselves up in busimess, had brought back with them the American idea. Annunciata listened to the end. She felt no pity for those who would better themselves by discontent and its product, revolt. She felt only resent-

ment, that her peace was being threat- at Wedeling." ened, her position assailed. And in her resentment she included the king the king summoned his valets, and was bimself. He should have done better.

And something of this she did not estrate to say. "Karnia is quiet sough," she finished, a final thrust.

Karnia is better off. A lowland, row bed. To what straits had they of order showed in his old cheeks. "I wearily. Something had gone out of and you spoke of Karnia. What- his life. He did not realize at first er plans we make, Karnia must be what it was. When he did, he smiled

Why? Karnia does not consider

He raised his hand. "You are Just now, Karnia is doing as onor of saking an alliance with A matrimonial alliance."

The archduchess was bardly surnot minded to yield too easily. The old recentment against her father

flamed. Indifferent mother though she was, she made capital of a fear for Hedwig's happiness.

At last she succeeded in irritating the king-a more difficult thing now years precautions at the paince had than in earlier times, but not so hard a matter at that. He listened quietly Men in the uniforms of lackeys, but until she had finished, and then sent doing no labor, were everywhere. But her away. When she had got part with time and safety she had felt se- way to the door, however, he called her back. And since a king is a king. even if he is one's father and very old,

"Just one word more," he said, in his thin, old, high-bred voice. "Much of your unhappiness was of your own | die. making. You, and you only, know how bonds. What with cold and long in much. But nothing that you have said action, and his recent drop over the compelled to make the decision flone, and soon. I have not much time,"

So, after all, was the matter of the Duchess Hedwig's marriage arranged, covery that under the robe he wore a composite outgrowth of expediency and obstinacy, of defiance and anger. And so was it hastened.

Irritation gave the king strength. That afternoon were summoned in and his swollen tongue protruding. haste the members of his council-fat Half dead he was, with cold and long old Friese, young Marschall with the anxiety. The brandy cleared his mind rat face, austere Bayeri with the long before he could speak, and he white skin and burning eyes, and oth- saw by the uniforms that he was in ers. And to them all the king dis- the hands of the enemy. He turned closed his royal will. There was some demur. But, after all, the king's will was dominant. Friese could but voice his protest and relapse into greasy faced eternity, and he was ready.

The chancellor sat silent during the them of what they all knew, their own of a tree. -a throne secure, a greater kingdom, bor by the sea.

The battle, which was no battle at all, was won. He had won. The country had won. The crown prince had won. Only Hedwig had lost. And only Mettlich knew just how she had

The necessity for work brought the king the strength to do it. Mettlich remained with him. Boxes were brought from vaults, unlocked and examined. Secretaries came and went, At eight o'clock a frugal dinner was spread in the study, and they ate it almost literally over state documents.

On and on, until midnight or thereabouts. Then they stopped. The thing was arranged. Nothing was left now but to carry the word to Karl.

Two things were necessary: Haste. The king, having determined it, would omed himself. He had tried. His lose no time. And dignity. The grandministers had tried. Taxes had been daughter of the king must be offered

the court. To this emergency Mettlich rose like the doughty old warrior and statesman that he was. "If you are willing, sire," he said, as he rose, "I will go myself."

"When?" "Since it must be done, the sooner the better. Tonight, sire." "To the capital?"

"Not so far. Karl is hunting. He is

He went almost immediately, and got to bed. But long after the automobile containing Mettlich and two secret agents was on the road toward the mountains, he tossed on his narrow bed. To what straits had they

his old grim smile in the darkness. He had lost a foe. More than anything, perhaps, he had dearly loved a fort."

CHAPTER VIII.

On the Mountain Road. The low gray car which carried the chancellor was on its way through the

mountains. It moved deliberately, for

hatred and fear of machines. Second. he was not of a mind to rouse King Karl from a night's sleep, even to bring the hand of the Princess Hedwig. His intention was to put up at some fin in a village not far from the lodge and to reach Karl by messenger early in the morning, before the hunters left

Then, all being prepared duly and in order, Mettlich himself would arrive, and things would go forward with dignity and dispatch.

The valley of the Ar deepened. The cliff rose above them, a wall broken here and there by the offtake of narrow ravines, filled with forest trees. There was a pause while the chains on the rear wheels were supplemented by others in front, for there must be no danger of a skid. And another pause, where the road slanted perilously toward the brink of the chasm. and caution dictated that the chancelfor alight, and make a hundred feet or so of dangerous curve afoot.

It required diplomacy to get him out. But it was finally done, and his beavy figure, draped in its military cape. vent on ahead, outlined by the lamps of the car behind him.

He was well around the curve, and the cliff was broken by a wedge of timber, when a curiously shaped object projected itself over the edge of the bank, and rolling down, lay almost at his feet. The lamps brought it into ing forward. When at last the trail sharp relief-a man, gagged and tied, and rolled, cigar shaped, in an automobile robe.

The chancellor turned, and called to his men. Then he bent over the bun-The others ran up, and cut the can change the situation. I am merely bank, the man could not speak. One of the secret service men had a flask, and held it to his lips. An amazing situation, indeed, increased by the disonly his undergarments, with a soldier's tunic wrapped around his shoulders. . They carried him into the car where he lay with head lolling back. sulkily silent then, convinced that he had escaped one death but to meet another. Twenty-four hours now he had'

He preferred, however, to die fully clothed, and when, in response to his conclave, silent, but intent. On each pointing up the bank and to his inspeaker he turned his eyes, and waited articulate mouthings, one of the secret until at last Kari's proposal, with its police examined the bit of woodland promises, was laid before them in full. with his pocket finsh, he found a pair His speech was short. He told neatly folded and hung over the branch The brandy being supple insecurity. He spoke but a word of mented by hot coffee from a patent botthe crown prince, but that softly. And tie, the man revived further, made an he drew for them a picture of the effort, and sat up. His tongue was future that set their hearts to glowing still swollen, but they made out what he said. He had been there since the freedom from the costs of war, a har- night before. He was of Karnia, and a king's messenger.

"I was coming back from the barrier," he said thickly, "where I had carried dispatches to the officer in charge. On my return a man hailed me from the side of the road, near where you found me. I thought that he desired to be taken on, and stopped my car. But he attacked me. He was armed and I was not. He knocked me senseless, and when I awakened I was



They Carried Him Into the Car.

above the road, among trees. I gave myself up when the snow commenced. Few pass this way: But I heard your car coming and made a desperate ef-

"Then," asked one of the agents, "these are not your clothes?"

"They are his, sir." inspected the garments. Before the manchancellor's eyes, button by button, strap on the sleeve, star on the cuff, ily. "You have him. We have traced

two reasons. First, the chancellor was | tain of his own regiment, the grens afraid of motors. He had a horseman's diers. Then one of his own men had done this infamous thing, one of his wn officers, indeed.

"Go through the pockets," he ordered sternly.

Came into view under the flash s pair of gloves, a box of matches, a silk handkerchief, a card case. The agent said nothing, but passed a card to the chancellor, who read it without com-

There was silence in the car. At last the chancellor stirred. "This nan-he took your car ou?"

"Yes. And he has not returned. No ther machine has passed.

The secret service men exchanged glances. There was more to this than appeared. Somewhere ahead, then, ons Nikky Larisch, with a motor that did not belong to him, and wearing clothing which his victim described as a chauffeur's coat of leather, breeches and puttees, and a fur greatcost over

"Had the snow commenced when this happened?"

"Not then, sir. Shortly after." "Go out with the driver," the hancellor ordered one of his men, and watch the road for the tracks of another car. Go slowly."

So it was that, after an hour or so, they picked up Nikky's trail, now twenty-four hours old but still clear, and followed it. The chancellor was awake enough by this time, and bendturned from the highway toward the shooting box at Wedeling, Mettlich fell back with something between a curse and a grean.

"The fool!" he muttered. "The young fool! It was madness."

At last they drew up at an inn in the village on the royal preserve, and the chanceller, looking rather gray, slighted. He directed that the man they had rescued be brought in. The chancellor was not for losing him just He took a room for him at the inn, and rather cavallerly locked him

The chancellor sipped bot milk and considered. Nikky Larisch a prisoner in Karl's hands caused him less anxiety than it would have a month before. But what was behind it all?

At a little before five the man out-side the prisoner's door heard something inside the room. He glanced in. All was quiet. The prisoner slept heavily, genuine sleep. There was no mistaking it, the sleep of a man warm after long cold and exhaustion, weary after violent effort. The agent went out again, and locked the door behind

And as the door closed, a trap door from the kitchen below opened soffly under the sleeping man's bed. Then, and only then, the chancellor of trousers where Nikky had left them, great caution came the landlord, head first, then shoulders. The space was cramped. He crawled up, like a snake out of a hole, and ducked behind the time comes, she will be willing curtains of the bed. All was still quiet, enough. save that the man outside struck a match and lighted a pipe.

Half an hour later, the chancellor's prisoner, still stiff and weak, was making his way toward the hunting lodge.

Kaiser saw him first, and found the story unenlightening. Nor could Karl, roused by a terrified valet, make much more of it. When the man had gone, Karl lay back among his pillows and eyed his agent.

"So Mettlich is here!" he said. "A hasty journey. They must be eager.' "They must be in trouble," Kaiser observed dryly. And on that uncomplimentary comment King Karl elept. his face drawn into a weary smile,

But he received the chancellor of Livonia cordially the next morning, going himself to the lodge doorstep to meet his visitor, and there shaking other bold and flowing-the scrawl of a king. And Hedwig, save for the cerehands with him.

"I am greatly honored, excellency," he said, with his twisted strile. "And I, sire."

But the chancellor watched him from under his shaggy brows. nessenger had escaped. By now Karl knew the story, knew of his midnight ride over the mountains, and the haste it indicated.

Karl himself led the way to his study, ignoring the chamberlain, and stood aside to let Mettlich enter. Then he followed and closed the door.

"It is a long time since you have honored Karnia with a visit," Karl observed. "Will you sit down?" Karl himself did not sit. He stood

negligently beside the mantel, an arm stretched along it. "Not since the battle of the dre," replied the chancellor dryly. He had headed an army of invasion then.

Karl smiled. "I hope that now your

errand is more peaceful." For answer the chancellor opened a portfolio he carried, and fumbled among its papers. But, having found the right one, he held it without opening it. "Before we come to that, sire, you have here, I believe, detained for some strange reason, a Captain Larisch, alde-de-camp"-he paused for ef-

prince of Livonia." Karl glanced up quickly. "Perhapa, The agent produced a flash light and if you will describe this gentle-

fect-"to his royal highness, the crown

"Nonsense," said the chancellor testhim here. Although by what authority

here to find out what you have

"Done with him?" echoed Karl, "If as Captain Larisch you refer to a madman who the night before last-"

"I do, sire. Madman is the word." "He is a prisoner," Karl said, in a new tone, stern enough now. "He assaulted and robbed one of my men. He stole certain documents. That be has not suffered for it already was because-well, because I believed that the unfortunate distrust between your country and mine, excellency, was

A threat that, undoubtedly. Let the arrangement between Karnia and Livonia be made, with Hedwig to seal the bargain, and Nikky was safe enough. But let Livonia demand too much, or not agree at all, and Nikky was lost. Thus did Nikky Larisch play his small part in the game of nations. "Suppose," said Kari unctuously, that we discuss first another more im-

portant matter. I confess to a certain impatience." He bowed slightly. The chancellor besitated. Then be glanced thoughtfully at the paper in

his hand. Through a long luncheon, the two alone and even the servants dismissed, through a longer afternoon, negotiations went on. Mettlich fought hard on some points, only to meet de-

"I Want That Letter."

feat. Karl stood firm. The great fortreases on the border must hereafter contain only nominal garrisons. For the scapert strip he had almost doubled his price. The railroad must be mpleted within two years.

"The Princess Hedwig." Karl said suddenly. "She has been told, of course?

"Not officially. She knows, how-

"How does she regard it?"

"Like The chancellor hesitated. most young women, she would prefer making her own choice. But that," he added hastily, "Is but a whim. She is a lovable and amiable girl.

Karl stared out through one of the heavily curtained windows. He was not so sure. And the time had gone by when he would have enjoyed the taming of a girl. Now he wanted peace-was he not paying a price for it?-end children to inherit his wellmanaged kingdom. And perhaps-who knows?-a little love. Before him rose a vision of Hedwig, her frank eyes, her color that rose and fell, her soft, round

"You have no reason to believe that she has-looked elsewhere?"

"None, sire," said the chancellor

stoutly. By late afternoon all was arranged, papers signed and witnessed, and the two signatures affixed, the one small and cramped-a soldier's hand; the

mony, was the bride of Karl of Kar-It was then that the chancellor rose and stretched his legs. "And now, sire," he said, "since we are friends and no longer enemies, you will. I know, release that mad boy of mine."

"When do you start back?" "Within an hour." "Before that time," said Karl, "you shall have him, chancellor,"

And with that Mettlich was forced to be content. He trusted Karl no more now than he ever had. But he made his adleus with no hint of tronble in his face. Karl stood for a moment in the open

air. It was done, then, and well done. It was hard to realize. He turned to the west, where for so long behind the mountains had lurked an enemy. A new era was opening; peace, disarmament, a quiet and prosperous land. He had spent his years of war and women. That was over.

When he returned to the study the agent Kaiser was already there. But Karl, big with plans for the future, would have been alone, and eyed the agent with disfavor.

"Well?" he demanded.

"We have been able to search the chancellor's rooms, sire," the agent said, "for the articles mentioned last night—a card case, gloves, and a silk handkerchief, belonging to the prisnide-de-camp to the crown prince of Livonia."

you hold him I fail to understand. I pressed. But Karl only looked at him. "I know that," he said coldly, "You are always just a little late with your

information, Kaiser." Something like malice showed in the agent's face. "Then you also know, sire, that it is this Captain Larisch with whom rumor couples the name of the Princess Hedwig." He stepped back a pace or two at sight of Karl's face. "You requested such information, sire."

For answer, Karl pointed to the door. For some time after he had dismissed the agent, Karl paced his library alone. Kaiser brought no unverified information. Therefore the thing was true. Therefore he had had his enemy in his hand, and now was pledged to let him go. For a time, then, Karl paid the penalty of many misdeeds. His triumph was ashes in

What if this boy, infatuated with Hedwig, had hidden somewhere on the road Olga Loschek's letter? What, then, if he recovered it and took it to Hedwig? What if-

But at last he sent for the prisoner upstairs, and waited for him with both jealousy and fear in his eyes.

Five minutes later Nikky Larisch was ushered into the red study, and having bowed, an insolent young bow at that, stood and eyed the king.

"I have sent for you to release you," said Kart.

Nikky drew a long breath. "I am grateful, sire," "You have been interceded for by

the chancellor of Livonia, General Mettlich, who has just gone." Nikky bowed. Karl fixed him with cold eyes. "But before you take leave of us," he said tronically, "I should like the true story of the night before last. Somehow, somewhere, a letter intended for me

was exchanged for a blank paper. I , want that letter." "I know no more than you, sire, It is not reasonable that I would have taken the risk I took for an envelope

containing nothing." "For that matter," said his majesty, "there was nothing reasonable about

anything you did!" And new Karl played his trump card, slayed it with watchful eyes on Nikky's face. He would see if report spoke the truth, if this blue-eyed boy was in love with Hedwig. He was a jenious man, this Karl of the cold eyes, jenious and passionate. Not as a king, then, watching a humble soldier of Livonia, but as man to man, be

gazed at Nikky. "For fear that loyalty keeps you stient. I may say to you that the old troubles between Karnia and Livenia

"I do not understand, sire." Karl hesitated. Then, with his twisted smile, he cast the rigid etiquette of such matters to the winds. "It is very simple," he said. "There will be no more trouble between these two neighboring countries, because a marriage has today been arrangedmarriage between the Princess Hedwig. his majesty's granddaughter, and my-

For a moment Nikky Larisch closed

his eyes. The anniversary of the death of Prince Hubert dawned bright and sunny. The place showed a thin covering of snow, which clung, wet and sticky, to the trees; but by nine o'clock most of it had disappeared, and Prince Ferdinand William Otto was informed that the excursion would

take place. Two motors took the party, by hack streets, to the landing stage. In the first were Annunciata, Hedwig, and the countess and at the last moment Otto had salvaged Miss Braithwaits from the second car, and begged a place for her with him. A police agent sat beside the chauffeur. Also another car just shead, contained other agents, by Mettitch's order before his departure-a plain black motor, with-

out the royal arms. In the second machine followed a part of the suite, Hedwig's lady in waiting, two gentlemen of the court, in parade dress, and Father Gregory. come from his monastery at Etzel to visit his old friend, the king.

At the landing stage a small crowd had gathered on seeing the red carpet laid and the gilt ropes put up, which indicated a royal visit. A small girl, with a hastily secured bouquet in her hot hands, stood nervously waiting. In deference to the anniversary, the flowers were tied with a black ribbon.

Annunciata grumbled when she saw the crowd, and the occupants of the first car looked them over carefully. It remained for Hedwig to spy the black ribbon. In the confusion, she slipped over to the little girl, who went quite white with excitement. "They are tovely," Hedwig whispered, "but please take off the black ribbon." The child eyed her anxiously. "It will come to pieces, highness,"

"Take the ribbon from your hair. It will be beautiful."

Which was done! But, as was not unnatural, the child forgot her speech, and merely thrust the bouquet, tied with a large pink bow, into the hands

of Prince Ferdinand William Otto. "Here," she said. It was, perhaps the briefest, and therefore the most agreeable presentation speech the crown prince had ever heard.

Old Adelbert, crippled veteran and long an attendant at the opera, loses his position, an event which starts a train of circumetances which have a strange bearing upon the future

(TO BE CONTINUED)

Philadelphia municipal court heard